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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/767,656	01/29/2004	Neil Hepburn	2003-IP-010320 UI USA	5392

20558 7590 09/16/2005

KONNEKER & SMITH P. C.
660 NORTH CENTRAL EXPRESSWAY
SUITE 230
PLANO, TX 75074

EXAMINER

KINNEY, NGOC

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3672

DATE MAILED: 09/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/767,656	Applicant(s) HEPBURN ET AL.	
	Examiner Ngoc Kinney	Art Unit 3672	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-47 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-47 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/24/04 & 4/25/05</u> <i>W</i> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3-8, 11, 15-28, 30-34, 37, 38, and 42-47 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by MacKenzie et al. (US PG PUB 2002/0157826). Mackenzie et al. disclose a method for completing a well having a branch wellbore 32 extending outwardly from a window 18 in a parent wellbore 30 (Figures 5-7). The method includes positioning a tubular string 12 having a portion positioned within the window (paragraph 25, lines 6-9) and swelling material 20 of either rubber or plastic is provided on the tubular string (paragraph 24, lines 3-7). The tubular string portion has an opening 18 formed to provide fluid communication between the tubular string and the parent wellbore (paragraph 23, lines 8-10).

Regarding claim 37, Mackenzie et al. disclose a method for engaging a latch 16 to support and orient the tubular string with the window of the primary wellbore.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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Claims 2, 9, 10, 12-14, 29, 35, 36 and 39-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacKenzie et al. in view of WO 02/059452 (US PGPUB 2004/0194971 is the English equivalent to this document and will be referenced in the rejection). Mackenzie et al. disclose all the limitations of the claimed invention but does not explicitly disclose that the expanding material can increase in volume when comes into contact with hydrocarbon fluid or water in the well. WO 02/059452 discloses an apparatus and method for creating a seal in a bore annulus, where the outer surface of a tubular string is provided with an elastomeric material (e.g. rubber) that is capable of swelling upon contact with an actuating agent (paragraph 8). The elastomeric material is capable of increasing in volume by radially outward expansion (paragraph 10, line 4). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made modify the expandable material for sealing a wellbore as taught by MacKenzie et al. with the swelling material as taught by WO 02/059452. This would be done to provide more effective sealing between the branch and the parent wellbores.

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Gano, Jordan Jr. and Smith et al. all show similar elements to those of the present invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ngoc Kinney whose telephone number is 571-272-1615. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-6 M-F.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



David Bagnell
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3672

nmk